

OCT 04 2001

MS. DEBBIE CARONE: Debbie Carone, Executive

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6 Director, Lander County.

7 This is the testimony of Kenny C. Guinn, U.S.

8 Department of Energy, public hearing, September 5, 2001.

9 Good afternoon. On behalf of the citizens of
10 the State of Nevada I would like to welcome you here this
11 afternoon, and hope my remarks and remarks of the many
12 concerned Nevadans who will speak later will be taken in
13 the spirit in which they are intended. That is, honest,
14 constructive and impassioned public input on an issue that
15 is paramount to the health and safety of every Nevadan and
16 every American whose home, school, or place of business
17 sits along the proposed paths that the deadliest substance
18 on earth, if the DOE has its way, will take to Nevada.

19 This debate is not new. As many of you know,
20 Nevada's fight to keep nuclear waste from coming to Yucca
21 Mountain has raged on for nearly 20 years. Unlike many of
22 the policy battles that grip Washington, however, this
23 fight transcends party affiliation, socio-economic classes,
24 race or gender and galvanizes Nevadans from every corner of
25 this state in opposition.

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1 Though the debate is not new, I must say that
2 recent developments, those that bring us here tonight, are
3 quite alarming and raise a number of new concerns.

4 The very purpose of this meeting is in
5 question. You have invited me and many good people here
6 tonight so you and the Department of Energy can gather
7 public comment on scientific evidence that is not complete
8 and has not been made public. Public comments in the
9 absence of this all-important evidence is premature and
10 grossly irresponsible.

11 Ladies and Gentlemen, this is not the way we
12 do business in Nevada, and certainly this is not the way
13 the Government should handle its affairs.

14 I am very disappointed that you have chosen to
15 disregard essentially all of my office's recommendations
16 and decided to hold these meetings prematurely and over our
17 reasonable objections.

18 We in Nevada will not stand for it.

19 Therefore, I would strongly advise and today
20 formally request you schedule additional hearings over the
21 course of coming months across Nevada to give our citizens
22 and their elected leaders a fair and appropriate chance to
23 respond to your completed findings.

24 And I assure you that my outrage at the lack

25 of protocol that has permeated this process will be
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1 detailed in letters directly to Secretary Abraham and the
2 President.

3 It is my sincerest hope that you recognize
4 this error and your duty to correct it.

5 I don't have to remind anyone here today that
6 it was not long ago that Nevadans and all Americans were
7 assured that nuclear testing was safe. It was less than 50
8 years ago.

9 Since that time the DOE admitted that the
10 aftermath of testing of the hydrogen bomb at Yucca Flats
11 caused innocent Americans to die and that cancer benefits
12 should be paid to the families of the dozens of men and
13 women who were contaminated by fallout from nuclear
14 testing.

15 I am not talking about casualties of war in
16 some distant country. I am talking about the small farmers
17 in Utah who tragically suffered from contaminated nuclear
18 air.

19 I am talking about the Nevada workers and
20 their families who took the Government at its word and
21 trudged to and from the test site every day with assurances
22 that they were not in harm's way.

23 And I am talking about generations of
24 patriotic American families financially wiped out fighting
25 cancer while they awaited some word of admission or
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1 assistance from their government.

2 The DOE pathetically only made that admission
3 just a few years ago and it came only after years of denial
4 and government red tape.

5 Just yesterday we learned for the first time
6 that germ warfare testing -- imagine, germ warfare testing
7 -- was conducted at that same test site without any
8 knowledge whatsoever by our own congressional delegation or
9 my office.

10 With a track record like this, it is no wonder
11 the Department of Energy lacks credibility not only in
12 Nevada, but also in our neighboring states.

13 Given the history, I trust you can understand
14 why I view this proceeding as morally illegal, if not
15 technically so.

16 It violates everything we believe in as
17 Americans. It duplicates all that was wrong in the past
18 and gives credence to the mistrust and cynicism harbored by

19 so many of our people.

20 Our concerns are clear. This wonderful state
21 has been ignored far too long. We demand fairness and we
22 demand accountability in this process. We will not sit
23 idly by and let the Department of Energy run roughshod over
24 our citizens with empty promises and bad science.

25 We did it once in good faith as proud and
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1 loyal Americans. But sadly, we did not get back what we
2 gave, and so we have learned from the past, and we are not
3 about to repeat it.

4 Thank you.

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